

Mon.
7
April

Verse to Learn

Moreover, by them is your servant warned;
in keeping them there is great reward.
Psalm 19:11



reading



Leviticus 24:1-9 - Tabernacle Rules

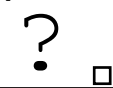
notes



The first part of this chapter deals with the light that is to burn continually from evening until morning in the Holy Place. The oil is to be pure and clean, carefully cleansed from leaves and all impurities. The point here is that what is given to God or used in God's service is to be the very best. This principle still applies today. The oil is to come from the people in general as a service involving the whole nation. In Zechariah 4:1-14 it makes clear that this lampstand symbolises Israel as the congregation of God, the giver of light to the world. Yet a lamp can only burn as it is supplied with oil and trimmed and cared for. Again we find a clue in Zechariah 4:6 where it says, 'Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit,' says the Lord of hosts. The lampstand won't burn without oil and without the high priest caring for it, and Israel will not be a light to the nations without the oil of the Holy Spirit and the continual ministering of the priest in the Holy Place. The people of God are told to be a light to the world, but again, without the grace of the Holy Spirit, and the work of our great High Priest, Jesus Christ, ministering before God on our behalf, this just won't happen.

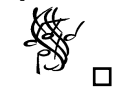
The Bread of the Presence is a national grain offering. Like the grain offerings it symbolises the consecration of the work of the nation to God. It makes the point that all that the nation does, should be continually done for the glory of God. All we do should be done to the glory of God, not just as individuals, but as nations. The Bread also symbolises the Lord Jesus Christ who is continually in the presence of God, offering His perfect obedience on behalf of His people.

questions



1. What does the oil for the lampstand symbolise?
2. What do we need to be a light to the world?
3. What does the Bread of the Presence symbolise?

praise



Ps. 104:22-29

prayers



1. Give thanks for the work Christ does on our behalf.
2. Pray from one of the prayer points in In The Pew.
3. Give thanks for Karen Reyburn.
4. Pray for family matters.

Sat.
12
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reading



Leviticus 27:1-34 - Vows

notes



Though we are not required to make special vows to God, people often do, out of thanksgiving, as a response to an answered prayer, or just spontaneously out of love for God. Leviticus 27 deals with what can be dedicated or promised to God, and if someone wants to reconsider a promise, on what conditions that may be done. An Israelite may consecrate to the Lord either persons, animals he owns, houses, or his right to any part of his land. He may not dedicate to God the first born, any devoted thing, or the tithe, simply because each of these belongs to the Lord already. Some things can be redeemed, others can't. A 20% penalty acts as a check upon the making of rash vows. God does not require us to make voluntary promises to Him. It doesn't make us more holy. He does require us to be honest, to not make rash promises, and to keep the promises we do make.

We've come to the end of Leviticus and Samuel Kellogg closes his commentary with these fitting words, 'The supreme lesson for this law is for men now, for the church of the New Testament as well. For the individual and for the nation, holiness, consisting in full consecration of body and soul to the Lord, and separation from all that defileth, is the Divine ideal, to the attainment of which Jew and Gentile alike are called. And the only way of its attainment is through the atoning Sacrifice, and the mediation of the High Priest appointed of God; and the only evidence of its attainment is a joyful obedience, hearty and unreserved, to all the commandments of God. For us all it stands written: You shall be holy; for I, Jehovah, your God, am holy.'

questions



1. What could be dedicated to God?
2. What was the penalty for changing your mind about a vow?
3. What does God call us to do in Leviticus?

praise



Ps. 105:30-45

prayers



1. Pray for the preaching and hearing of God's Word tomorrow; that sinners would be converted and Christians grow in their faith.
2. Pray from one of the prayer points in In The Pew.
3. Give thanks for Ian and Elizabeth Shaw.
4. Pray for family matters.

Fri.
11
April

Verse to Learn

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Psalms 19:11



reading



Leviticus 26:1-46 - Blessings and Cursings

notes



This chapter forms a kind of conclusion to what has gone before, with chapter 27 being more of an appendix. The three commands in verses 1-2 present a brief summary of the whole law. They forbid idolatry and command God's people to respect God's sabbaths and His sanctuary. This is essentially a summary of the first four commandments which have to do with man's duty to God and are fundamental to everything else.

God promises that those who walk in His ways will receive blessings of good weather and prosperity, peace, and best of all, the gift of God's presence. God's purpose in blessing Israel's faithfulness is to witness to the nations that He, Jehovah, is the one true God, and Israel is His treasure.

The curses are longer and fuller, because it's easy to take God's blessings for granted, and we need to be reminded what life is like when God's gifts are removed. The curses increase in severity as the Israelites' hearts increase in hardness; they also permeate all of life. They are cursed with famine and economic collapse, with wild beasts and war, and worst of all with God leaving them to destruction, exile, and slavery.

Leviticus 26 is a prophecy of Israel's history - all that is described here comes to pass. Interestingly verse 40 which begins the section describing Israel's repentance and restoration is usually translated, 'But if they confess...', but in the Hebrew there is no 'if'. Some think that Leviticus 26 might be a prophecy of the future repentance of Israel - which ties in with what Paul says in Romans 11 about the Jews turning to Christ.

The main point to take away from this chapter is that God has never withdrawn His promise to bless His covenant people for faithfulness, and He has never relented on His earthly judgements on disobedience.

questions



1. What kind of blessings does God promise?
2. What does God promise to do when the Israelites repent?

praise



Ps. 105:20-29

prayers



1. Pray that God would enable you to walk in His ways.
2. Pray from one of the prayer points in In The Pew.
3. Give thanks for Graham Russell.
4. Pray for family matters.

Tue.
8
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Verse to Learn

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reading



Leviticus 24:10-23 - Treason Against God

notes



There is not a nation in the world that doesn't have a concept of treason. Treason is understood to attack the foundations of a society or nation - it is a rebellious assault on the authority of the nation. And even today, most nations deal very severely with treason, because if they didn't their nation and society would collapse. Killing a police officer or assassinating a public figure is seen as an attack upon the nation itself as opposed to a simple murder, because these men represent the nation.

The key to understanding this passage is to understand that blasphemy is treason against God. The foundation of society is God. He is the one who has set the standards of right and wrong; He is the one who rules over everything. Blasphemy is the equivalent of an assault. It is a public attack on the character, integrity, and final authority of the God of the Bible. It may call down a curse on God. It may describe God in obscene or perverse language or imagery. But treason against God is treason against a Biblical order, for it undermines the foundations of the family, church, and state. If God is irrelevant, blasphemy steadily loses its status as a crime. It is assumed today that God's name needs no civil protection. Treason against God is considered irrelevant. But if God's name and reputation are not protected by law, then no man's name and reputation will be protected for very long.

All of us, before we came to faith in Christ, were, if not outwardly, then inwardly blasphemers against God - in rebellion against Him. But the good news of the cross means that blasphemers who repent and trust the Saviour can know the forgiveness of all their sins and be saved from the coming wrath of God.

questions



1. Why is blasphemy like treason?
2. Why does God take blasphemy so seriously?

praise



Ps. 104:30-35

prayers



1. Pray for our nation - that it would honour God's name.
2. Pray from one of the prayer points in In The Pew.
3. Give thanks for Fraser Ridley.
4. Pray for family matters.

Wed.
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Leviticus 25:1-38 - Jubilee

The seventh year is a year of rest for the land with a total suspension of agricultural labour for the entire period. Whatever grows spontaneously during this time is free to all, both man and beast. God promises to bless them if they are obedient, and the 6th year abundance and spontaneous growth will get them through. The central point here is that God owns the land, not man.

The sabbath year always begins with the Feast of Atonement on the 10th day of the 7th month. When, at the 7th sabbath year's completion, when the Day of Atonement comes round again at the beginning of the 50th year, at the close of the ceremony, a loud trumpet is sounded, proclaiming liberty - freedom from slavery and debt. In Israel the king owns all the land, but the king is Jehovah. This means that properly speaking there can be no such thing in Israel as a sale or purchase of land. All that any man can buy or sell is the right to its products, and that only for a limited time; for every 50th year the land is to revert to the family to whom its use has been originally assigned. The price is proportionate to the number of years between the sale and the Jubilee. The landholder always has the right to redeem the land in one of three ways: a near relative can buy it back for him; he can buy it back if he is able; or in the year of Jubilee, it reverts back to him. Houses on the land are so tied to the land, that the Jubilee laws apply to them as well. The Levites, who have no land, are also provided for. God also commands Israel to deal mercifully with a brother who has become poor. The principle here is that God has been merciful to us, so we are to be merciful to others.

questions



1. What happened the seventh year?
2. What happened the year of Jubilee?

praise



Ps. 105:1-9

prayers



1. Give thanks for God's mercy to you.
2. Pray from one of the prayer points in In The Pew.
3. Give thanks for David, Angie, Josh, Emily, and Joel Robertson.
4. Pray for family matters.

Thur.
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Verse to Learn

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reading



Leviticus 25:39-55 - Redemption

A man might become so poor that he might choose to sell himself as a slave. Three different slavery scenarios are described here. First, you have the man who has sold himself to a fellow Hebrew. In this case he is not to be treated as a slave but as a hired servant. His master has a right to his labour but not to his person. If he is a servant of Jehovah, no one else can own him, and at the year of Jubilee, he is freed.

The second case of slavery has to do with Israelites owning non-Israelites. These slaves are considered a permanent possession and not released at Jubilee. However it is forbidden to kidnap people and sell them as slaves (Exodus 21:16). The law also protects any slave from violence and tyranny on the part of his master.

The third case of slavery has to do with an Israelite selling himself to a foreigner living in the land. Again, he is to be treated as a hired servant and released on the year of Jubilee, and any near relative who can buy him out of bondage before then is free to do so. The whole nation is responsible to make sure that the Israelite slaves are not oppressed and are released along with their families at the year of Jubilee.

The year of Jubilee shows that God Himself is the ultimate Kinsman-Redeemer who, when no one else can help, acts to release His people from slavery and give them their inheritance. In Luke 4:18-19 Christ declares from Isaiah that He has been sent to proclaim liberty to the captives...to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour. Christ has come, when we could do nothing to help ourselves, to redeem us from slavery to sin, to pay our debts and set us free, and to restore to us a heavenly inheritance. He is our Jubilee.

questions



1. What kind of slavery is described here?
2. How is Christ like the year of Jubilee?

praise



Ps. 105:10-19

prayers



1. Give thanks for our redemption in Christ.
2. Pray from one of the prayer points in In The Pew.
3. Give thanks for George and Janette Rodger.
4. Pray for family matters.